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SUBJECT: MEDIA COVERAGE ON THE VISIT OF SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
DONALD H. RUMSFELD TO HONDURAS, AUGUST 20, 2003

1. Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld visited Honduras on 8/20 and met with Honduran President Ricardo Maduro, Minister of Defense Federico Breve, Chief of Staff General Isaias Barahona and other top governmental officials.

2. In his opening remarks, Secretary Rumsfeld expressed the gratitude of the U.S. government for the Honduran decision to supply infantry and military police forces for Iraq, which was important for Honduras, the U.S. and the region.

3. All four national newspapers (La Tribuna, El Heraldito, La Prensa and Tiempo) announced Secretary Rumsfeld's visit on 8/19, after President Maduro announced the visit.

Media Coverage of Secretary Rumsfeld's visit

4. Newspapers: All four Honduran newspapers had an extensive coverage of the press conference by Secretary Rumsfeld and President Ricardo Maduro. Three of them (Tegucigalpa-based "El Heraldito" and "La Tribuna", and San Pedro Sula-based "La Prensa") carried a front-page photo of Secretary Rumsfeld, Ambassador Larry Palmer and President Maduro.

5. Television: Coverage on the main television stations was extensive. All evening news programs (on channels 3, 5, 7, 9, 11 and 13) reported on the visit. A noon program (channel 3's Noticiero Hoy Mismo al Da) had live coverage of part of the press conference that was rerun in the evening program. Coverage continued on 8/21 on the morning news program Noticiero TVC (channels 3, 5, and 7).

6. Radio: Radio networks HRN, Radio America, and other smaller stations also covered the visit. Some of them broadcast the press conference live.

7. International Press: International wires such as AP, AFP, Reuters, Notimex, Acan-Efe, and CNN Radio covered the visit. In addition, U.S. press accompanying Secretary Rumsfeld (AP, Reuters, AFP, NBC News, Chicago Tribune and Telemundo) also covered the visit.

8. Headlines:

- "The U.S. wants to set up antidrug base" "Apparently they seek to establish a base to help them achieve the objectives of Plan Colombia" (El Heraldito).
- "Aid is being analyzed" "About disarmament, he said: we wish you well and we want to assist you" (El Heraldito).
- "The U.S. respects efforts of Honduras against narcos" (La Prensa).
- "The U.S. is analyzing request of equipment to fight narco trafficking" (La Tribuna).
- "Why did Rumsfeld come?" "The U.S. respects the Central American decision to reduce arms" (Tiempo, 8/21).
- "The U.S. is considering to give helicopters and radars for fight against drugs" (Tiempo, 8/21).

Palmer